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SPEECH

OF

HON. JOHN B. ALLEY, OF MASS.,

ON THE

PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSES OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY.

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Delivered in the House of Representatives of the United States, Monday, April 30, 1860.

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## SPEECH.

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Mr. ALLEY. Mr. Chairman, in the remarks, which I shall submit to the consideration of the committee at this time, I propose to discuss the principles and purposes of the Republican party, the causes which led to, and the necessity of, its organization, the inevitable tendency of its doctrines, and the final result of its action.

Slavery has been, to a greater or less extent, a disturbing element in our national politics ever since the organization of the Government; in fact, political differences were occasioned by it, and sectional prejudices grew out of it, at a period long anterior to the formation of the Federal compact. The establishment, encouragement, and perpetuity of the African slave trade, on the part of Great Britain, against the remonstrance of some of the colonies, was among the causes which led to the American Revolution. When the Constitution was framed and adopted, slavery existed in all the States save one, and to her great glory be it spoken—that State was Massachusetts. The manner in which slavery was abolished in Massachusetts in 1780, seven years before the Federal Constitution was framed, is as honorable to the historic fame of her judiciary as it was to the patriotism and sense of justice of her people. It was not abolished by legislative enactment, but simply by the decision of her supreme court, that slavery was incompatible with the principles of her constitution, and the declaration of sentiment in its preamble. Thus it was that slavery ceased forever within her borders. And Massachusetts, ever true to this doctrine of her constitution, stands forth to-day with no law upon her statute-book in proscription of the unfortunate African, except it may be in obedience to what is believed to be the higher law of the Constitution of the Union.

The almost universal sentiment of the North is, that slavery is a great moral, social, and political evil; productive of no good; but much of evil to the master, as well as to the slave; and to hold him as a chattel is in violation of every precept of Christianity, of every axiom of liberty, of every sentiment of justice, of every feeling of humanity. While they hold it to be a duty to oppose its further extension, they do not regard themselves as politically responsible for its existence and perpetuity in the States. So long as many of the most enlightened and gifted men of the South, who were statesmen and patriots, regarded it as an evil, and deplored its existence, and agreed with the North that it ought not to be extended, and declared, also, that it could not be defended upon any other ground than that of uncontrollable necessity, the North were satisfied to be quiet and content. But when it was discovered that it was the determined purpose of the South, in violation of all law and precedent, to force slavery everywhere, the people of the North became aroused, and now stand ready, with a unanimity proportioned to their conviction of the purposes and designs of the South, to declare “thus far, but no further”—not another inch of slave territory.

Upon this question of the extension of slavery, the South has been gradually growing desperate; until now it openly announces its treasonable purpose to dissolve this Union, if not permitted to use the whole force of this government to extend and protect slavery in all the national Territories. Many far seeing and sagacious people at the North have predicted for a long time this design of the South, but were unable to make the mass of the people believe it. But “whom the gods wish to destroy, they first make mad.” The South have proclaimed it in unmistakable language; and the anti-slavery sentiment of the country will now take possession of the national Government. It cannot be averted. The South may rave and howl as much as it pleases; it must be done; and let me say to the South, these chosen Republican leaders will so administer the Government that every interest will be protected; that exact and equal justice will be done to the North as well as to the South, to the East and to the West. I am sorry to see, on the part of some, a disposition to apologize for the position and action of the Republican party, and claiming that the organization is a purely defensive one. It is well enough to state, what is the fact, that had it not been for the madness of the South upon this question, the Republican party would never have obtained its present gigantic proportions. But this party needs no apology. It asks for nothing that is not clearly and constitutionally right; and apology for its action is as much out of place as an apology for

the views and actions of Washington, Henry, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, Webster, and Clay, upon this question of slavery and its extension. It stands where they stood, condemning slavery and opposed to its further extension; and, like them, disclaiming any purpose or authority to interfere with its existence in the States. Its fault, if any, is what theirs was, in being too conservative to satisfy the anti-slavery sentiment of the country.

General Washington wrote to Robert Morris, as follows:

"I can only say that there is not a man living who wishes more sincerely than I do to see a plan adopted for the abolition of it; but there is only one proper and effectual mode by which it can be accomplished, and that is, by legislative authority. And this, as far as my suffrage will go, shall not be wanting."

Should not this testimony of the immortal "Father of his Country," in favor of our principles and action, justify our position to the country and the world?

Mr. Jefferson declared it to be the sincere wish of his heart to see slavery abolished; for, said he, "I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, and His justice cannot sleep forever." And, alluding to its violent overthrow, he declared: "The Almighty has no attribute which can take side with us in such a contest."

Patrick Henry declared: "That he honored the noble effort to abolish slavery."

Mr. Madison said that slavery found no justification in the laws of justice and right, and its extension should be resisted.

Mr. Monroe was equally emphatic in his denunciation of slavery; and in his speech in the Virginia convention, he said:

"We have found that this evil has preyed upon the very vitals of the Union, and has been pre-judicial to all the States in which it has existed."

Mr. Webster declared "that his right arm should be severed from its socket sooner than it should cast a vote favoring the extension of slavery."

Mr. Clay declared "slavery to be a great moral, social, and political" evil; and he advocated, with great earnestness and power, at every period of his life, the gradual emancipation of the blacks.

These illustrious characters and eminent statesmen, if living to-day, with these opinions of theirs standing upon the enduring records of the nation's history, could not receive the smallest commission for public service at the hands of this national Administration—an Administration which will remain in all coming time as a standing monument of usurpation and crime.

The Republican party reflects every shade of opinion upon the question of slavery. The organization contains within its limits the most ultra conservative men, and the most zealous anti-slavery advocates, agreeing only upon one object, namely, the determination to prevent the further extension of slavery.

The Democratic party contains within its folds the rankest secessionists or disunionists and the mildest conservatives, but all equally bent, at least so far as the organization is concerned, upon extending and perpetuating human slavery. But neither of the extremes of these two wings is destined to be immediately successful in obtaining possession of the national Government. The disunionists of the South could no more succeed in placing a representative of their ideas in the Presidential chair than the Abolitionists of the North can elect one of their number to that high position. But the anti-slavery sentiment of the North is thoroughly aroused; and, acting in conjunction with the conservatism of the whole country, it will place in the Presidential chair, on the 4th of March, 1861, a Republican President of conservative tendencies, but firm convictions; and whether he be the distinguished Senator of New York or any one else, he will be sustained by the whole people of the North and the patriotic men of the South. You may as well make up your mind to it; you must submit to it.

These threats of dissolution of the Union are as the idle wind. The great body of the people at the South are not so deficient in understanding and intelligence as not to know that they could not live a moment, and maintain "their peculiar institution," outside of the Union, in hostility to the North. I have no fear of any serious movement for dissolution on the part of the South. "Barking dogs never bite." I confess I have some fears of the North, although I know they are a magnanimous and forbearing people; yet multitudes are beginning to feel that there is a point beyond which "forbearance ceases to be a virtue." When they consider that their commercial, their manufacturing, and all their political interests, are neglected and sacrificed, and everything made subservient to the interests of slavery, as they have been for years past; I say, when all this is fully realized, as it soon must be, it is impossible to predict what the consequences will be. Certain it is, that, first of all, they will rise in their might and demand their rights under the Constitution and laws. But let me tell gentlemen of the South, this Union will never be dissolved by them; it will take a mightier arm than theirs to overthrow this Government. If dissolved at all, it will be by the resistless will of the North.

Gentlemen talk about the white people of the South as though they were the special objects of God's providence; and they taunt the white laborers of the North with being slaves to the capitalists of the North. I heard a southern Senator declaim the other day upon the floor of the Senate, and stigmatize the free States as servile States. Yes, sir, he repeated it—servile States; and I have heard Representatives upon this floor talk about the white slaves of the North. Let me say to those gentlemen that there are multitudes of laboring men in the district I have the honor to represent, as there are all over the North, who are the equals in mental and moral culture, in general intelligence, and in all the attributes that constitute a true manhood, of a large majority of the southern Representatives upon this floor. Why, sir, there are several mechanics who belong to a lit-



erary society in my own neighborhood, who are dependent upon their daily labor for support, that, for learning and eloquence, are hardly surpassed by the distinguished Senator from Virginia whom I heard make the remark. Labor at the North is respected; and it is only the idle and vicious that are degraded and despised. How is it at the South? There labor is despised because of slavery; and the average condition of the great body of the non-slaveholders of the South—and they constitute four fifths of the whole—will not begin to compare favorably in education, general intelligence, moral worth, and manly feeling, with the average of the native negro population of my own State; and when I say this I say what I know from personal observation and knowledge; for I have travelled extensively in the South, and know much of its institutions and people. The North have no desire to disparage the people of the South. We feel that they need our sympathy and pity more than they deserve our censure; but their arrogance and braggadocio cannot but excite derision and contempt.

A distinguished foreigner remarked to me, some time ago, that he had been travelling at the South, and nothing amused him more than the affectation of superiority over the North which many of the southern people assumed. "Why," said he, "as a whole; they bear no better comparison with the North than a last year's almanac does with the finest edition of Washington Irving's works."

The South has been prolific in great men, and nearly all her eminent statesmen in the past have borne their testimony against slavery, and opposed its extension; but the lesser lights of the present have discovered that they were all in error. Their men of to-day pronounce slavery a blessing, both to the master and the slave, to be nourished, extended, and protected, notwithstanding they see all round them the evidences of blight, desolation, and decay, which every one outside of the slave States can perceive is "ascrivable to the withering, blasting effects of slavery." Take Virginia, for example. Less than seventy years ago this State contained twice as many inhabitants as New York, and her political power in Congress and the electoral colleges was nearly double that of the Empire State. How is it to-day? The population of New York is nearly three times as great as that of Virginia, and her political power in Congress and the electoral colleges is nearly three times as much as that of "the mother of Presidents." How is it with their material resources? Seventy years ago New York exported about three million, and Virginia about four million; to-day, the former State exports annually over one hundred million, and the latter less than she did seventy years ago.

The productions and importations of the two States at that time and the present show a much greater disparity in favor of the great northern State. The imports of this State amount to near two hundred million per annum; while those of the other amount to less than one million per year. The annual products of the Empire State amount to more than two hundred and fifty million, while those of this great southern State amount to only about forty million per year. When the Constitution was adopted, only seventy years ago, New York was behind Virginia, both in products and importations. But a short time previous to that, this latter State was the first commercial State in the Union—her commerce exceeded that of all New England, and was three times as great as that of New York. Now, New York city alone is worth more than twice as much as the whole State of Virginia, and contains more than half as many inhabitants. I do not speak of these two States as exceptional cases; there is even more difference with some of the others than with these. I might take each and every one of the slave States, and compare them in detail with the free States, in prosperity and progress, with less favorable results for some of the slave States than the comparison between New York and Virginia.

Take also, for instance, Pennsylvania and South Carolina. The imports of foreign goods into South Carolina a century ago were near three million dollars. At present they are but little more than half that amount; whereas, in Philadelphia alone, they are more than twelve times as much, against a very trifling amount one hundred years ago. The products of the manufacturing, mining and mechanic arts, in Pennsylvania, amount to about two hundred million dollars per annum, while in South Carolina they amount to less than ten million dollars per year. Before the Revolution, the "Palmetto State" was the second commercial province on the continent.

Look at Kentucky and Ohio. Kentucky was admitted into the Union ten years before Ohio, with a finer climate, more productive soil, and greater natural advantages; yet Ohio has outstripped her in population, wealth, and enterprise, to an extent that renders any comparison between them, in almost anything, absurd. No one, whose judgment is not completely blinded, can fail to see that all this is a race between freedom and slavery: a system of forced labor on the one side and voluntary industry on the other. When we look at these incontrovertible facts, may we not ask where would this nation be to-day if it were not for the free States? If we were all slave States, no such career of greatness and glory as we now witness in this infant Republic would have been presented to the admiring gaze of an astonished world. On the contrary, if the South had abolished slavery in the early days of our history, her territory would have been covered, in the language of another, "with cities, and villages, and railroads; and the country, instead of thirty, would have had fifty million people, who would have hailed the rising morn, exulting in republican liberty."

Virginia is much larger, territorially, than New York; with a finer climate, greater natural advantages of every kind. In fact, let her abolish slavery, and she would soon outstrip any State of this Union in wealth and importance; but if she will cherish and perpetuate this curse within her borders, she must remain imbecile and poverty-stricken, distinguished only for her slave-breeding—living upon reminiscences of the past, with no glory in the present, and without hope in the future.

But in these comparisons I have not alluded to my own State of Massachusetts, so often reviled



and so frequently calumniated upon this floor—a State which stands incomparably above them all, not only in historic fame, but no less in present greatness and unrivalled achievement. She needs no eulogy from any of her sons. “Her works praise her;” and slaveholding arrogance may disparage her merits, but she stands forth to-day, in the estimation of all enlightened men throughout the world, as the model State of this Union. Her achievements in science, in literature, in arts, in industrial pursuits, and in works of benevolence, and her intellectual and moral standard, are altogether unparalleled by any section of equal territorial extent upon this continent. Equally pre-eminent is her historic greatness; and so well settled is this by the general judgment of all mankind, that no one whose opinion is worth quoting dares to deny her historic supremacy.

But we of the North are not only threatened with a dissolution of the Union, in the event of a contingency, which I think is sure to happen, namely, the election of a Republican President, but we are told that non-intercourse is to be established immediately with the North, and the South will purchase no more of her products. This is, indeed, alarming; but let us inquire how this is to be effected. Everything that the South has to sell her poverty compels her to sell for cash only, while everything we dispose of to the South we give her a liberal credit upon. The South to-day cannot, in my opinion, pay its debts; and it has not property enough, in my judgment—not what we of the North call property—to pay seventy-five cents on the dollar of what it owes. And shall they talk of non-intercourse? Why, if you except the last few years, in which the South has been remarkably prosperous, owing to the high price of her products—a state of things which it is impossible should last—and the North has lost more money at the South, a great deal, than she has ever made by the trade of the South, and there is scarcely a northern merchant who has not been obliged to depend upon his profits from custom received from the middle and western States, to meet his losses suffered in trade at the South. I remember well that in the great commercial revulsion that swept over this country like a tornado in 1837, every northern merchant that I knew in all the northern cities that dealt exclusively with the South failed and was ruined. The same thing again occurred in 1842—the year in which the United States bankrupt law was passed, which wiped out untold millions of southern indebtedness; more, in fact, than the profits of the whole trade of the South would then amount to for half a score of years. The only houses that survived those two storms were those which had kept clear of trading with the South. Some years ago I was published in several of the southern cities as one who was hostile to slavery—a merchant whose store should be avoided and shunned, because I was a Free-Soiler; but I never discovered it made any difference. I will only say that if non-intercourse with me had always been the practice on the part of the South, I should have more money to-day than I have now. Taking into view the poverty and dependent condition of the South, this talk about non-intercourse is simply ridiculous—as much so as it would be for our wives and children, who are so dependent upon us they could not live a week without us, to threaten us with dissolution and abandonment.

But these threats about withdrawing from the North the trade of the South, to say nothing of their futility and impotency, have a moral significance not unworthy of comment. Such an appeal to the cupidity and avarice of the North—to stifle their honest convictions and suppress the holiest impulses of their nature at the call of mammon—is an insult to our people; which not a few northern miscreants, I regret to know, are equally with the South responsible for. But, thanks to the integrity and moral heroism of the North, such an appeal will have but little effect. I need only add, in confirmation of what I have already said, of the dependent condition of the South upon the North, that notwithstanding the intensity of feeling on the part of the South, the violent threats and vehement declarations about non-intercourse since the commencement of this session, I do not know of a single merchant at the North, that I am acquainted with, who has been in the habit of trading with the South—and I know of hosts of such in the Republican ranks—whose trade has diminished. On the contrary, I know of many, and some of them intense Republicans, whose trade has increased in that quarter. All men of experience know that trade will seek the best markets, either for buying or selling, in spite of popular clamor.

We have heard a great deal said about the Helper book, and some of our timid friends on this side of the House have felt quite alarmed at the denunciations and abuse that have been heaped upon those who recommended it. Mr. Chairman, I am not ashamed to confess that I read that book, and recommended it, and contributed money to procure its publication for gratuitous circulation. And I think there is nothing incendiary in it; if I thought there was, I should regret its publication, and would trample it under foot; for as much as I desire the overthrow of slavery, I do not wish to see it removed by insurrection and bloodshed. There are in it many extravagant declarations and foolish suggestions which I do not approve of; but I never saw any book that was written by an enthusiast that did not contain more or less extravagances. There is in it a great deal of useful statistical information which will do any one good to read; and if the South would read it carefully and properly, I think it would do them no harm, and might do them much good.

But we must remember that Helper is a southern man; therefore we should make allowance for his enthusiasm and extravagance, for extravagance, both in sentiment and action, is indigenous to southern soil. Well, indeed, may the South shrink from the exposure of its imbecility in that book. The statistics which it presents, well authenticated as they are, show but too conclusively how rapidly the South is deteriorating; while it is shown that the North, on the contrary, is progressing in intelligence, population, and wealth, with a rapidity unparalleled in the history of the world. He says:

“Less than three quarters of a century ago, say in 1789—for that was about the average time of the abolition of slavery in the northern States—the South, with advantages in soil, climate, rivers, harbors, minerals, forests, and,



indeed, almost every other natural resource, began an even race with the North in all the important pursuits of life; and now, in the brief period of scarce threescore years and ten, we find her completely distanced, enervated, dejected, and dishonored. Slave owners and slave drivers are the sole authors of her disgrace; and as they have sown, so let them reap."

He shows by unmistakable data that the value of all the property in all the slave States of the Union, exclusive of negroes, is not as much as that of one of the northern States. He shows, also, from the undisputed record of their views, that the great patriots of the South, in the days of the Revolution, and in the early history of the Republic, whose memories they cherish with the deepest reverence, were nearly all in favor of freedom and against slavery. No wonder it is distasteful to them thus to be reminded by one of their own fellow-citizens of their mental degeneracy and material decay.

As I have said before, this slavery question has been a disturbing element in our national politics ever since the organization of the General Government; and it will ever continue to be until it is confined within the limits of the States, when the Federal Government will cease to have any responsibility for its existence; for all are agreed, the South unanimously, and nineteen twentieths of the North, that we have nothing to do with it in the States, and are no more responsible, politically, for its existence there, than we are for the serfdom of Russia. Until the slavery question is settled, by the national Government being relieved from all responsibility for its existence, such is its aspect now, that it will continue to be the all-absorbing question upon the political arena. I have watched the progress of the anti-slavery sentiment with great interest from the day that the South, in its first act of madness, refused to receive and refer appropriately, petitions praying Congress to inquire into the expediency of abolishing slavery in the District of Columbia. That venerable patriot and statesman, John Quincy Adams, whose large experience, eminent service, matchless ability, and unquestioned patriotism, entitled his opinions to more consideration than those of any other man in Congress, raised his warning voice of admonition and remonstrance. He told the South that he was opposed to granting the prayer of the petitioners; that he thought good reasons could be given for his opinion; and if the petitions were received, appropriately referred and reported upon, the whole question would be consigned to the tomb of the Capulets. But he warned them that if they trampled upon this great constitutional right—the *sacred* right of the humblest citizen in the land—they would raise such a storm of just and holy indignation at the North, that no power on earth could suppress it. Who is there now so blind as not to see the verification of that prediction? From that day to this the anti-slavery sentiment of the country has been gradually strengthening as one after another of the demands of the South have been put forth, until it has become in opposition to the further extension of slavery as resistless as the waves of the ocean.

Mr. Calhoun said at that time that the South must prevent the entering wedge, by refusing to receive abolition petitions; for, said he, if you permit this sentiment of abolition to obtain a foothold, by the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, although they do not pretend to have any constitutional right to meddle with it in the States, yet the moral influence of such action will procure its overthrow in the States. For, said he, Europe is now opposed to the institution of slavery; and if the North are against us, the whole world would be against us, and the South could not resist the moral influence of such combined opposition.

How fatal the delusion, and how futile the attempt to stifle the deep-rooted, conscientious, and religious convictions of a great people, by the passage of a few resolutions, concocted by aspiring politicians. As the "old man eloquent" told them, they were only adding fuel to the flame.

So it was with the passage of the fugitive slave act; a measure of no practical benefit to the South, which can never be executed in many of the States of the North; a law which I believe to be, with a vast majority of the people of my own State, one of the most wicked, unconstitutional, and barbarous laws that was ever conceived by the human mind. I remember that at the time of its passage I was travelling with a very intelligent gentleman, a slaveholder of South Carolina, an old friend of mine, and he told me that he regarded it as the worst law for the interests of the South that ever was enacted. He said it was proper and right enough in itself, but it could be of no practical service to the South, and would only serve to arouse, what he called, the prejudices and religious fanaticism of the North, in opposition to the peace and interests of the South. And, said he, I know enough of the people of the North to know that this sentiment of hostility to slavery is founded upon a mistaken, but nevertheless conscientious religious conviction of its sinfulness and wrong; therefore it is useless to talk about constitutional rights against religious convictions; for any man, or set of men, who believe themselves armed with the panoply of heaven, are ready to maintain a warfare against the world.

The South again exhibited its madness and folly in the repeal of the Missouri compromise act—a measure which has been productive of nothing but disaster and ruin to the interests of the South; and they are now determined to force upon an unwilling people another act, of more supreme folly—to characterize it by no harsher term—than either of the others, namely, the enactment of a congressional slave code. Such an act will be the last nail in their coffin, if they should be permitted to drive it.

The necessity of the Republican organization is to be found in the occasion which has arisen to resist the usurpations and aggressions of the slave power, so vastly multiplied of late, culminating at last in the corruption of the supreme judiciary of the land—in the Dred Scott decision; although in law, I think, that part of it which is of any value to the South may justly be considered, in legal parlance, extra-judicial, and of no binding force; but it is nevertheless an indication of the inauguration of a policy which, if persisted in, must make the legislative department of the Government entirely subservient to the judiciary, which will finally result, if not checked, in the overthrow of

the liberties of the American people. It is an innovation and usurpation that must be resisted at all hazards; and to me the result of the coming presidential election has more significance and greater importance from its probable connection with the organization of that court than from any other cause.

It may seem to some who have great reverence for the judiciary, as somewhat harsh to characterize the recent action of the Supreme Court as corrupt. But when we consider that this Court has always carefully abstained from giving any decision upon any question of law or of fact, except where it was actually obliged to—and never either, except upon those points, in particular, that it was imperative upon them to adjudicate—now for the Court to go out of its way to give opinions, which under the circumstances it had no moral right to give, upon questions purely of a political character, is not only corrupt but degrading. No act of the executive, legislative, or judicial department of the Government from its foundation, so shocked the public mind—both for its meanness and atrocity—as did the *Dred Scott* decision. The Court, in order to maintain its decision in that case, that colored men, descendants of Africans who had been imported as slaves, whether bond or free, were not citizens, within the meaning of the Constitution, was compelled to falsify history and ignore every principle of justice and right. The Court declares that at the time of the Declaration of Independence the whole civilized world universally regarded them as "having no rights which the white man was bound to respect; and that the negro might justly and lawfully be reduced to slavery for his benefit." This declaration is made in the face and eyes of the facts, that England's highest courts had decided, several years before our separation from Great Britain, that the negroes had the same natural rights as the white man. And many of her noblest and best citizens had declared the enslavement of the blacks to be a sin of the deepest dye, and a crime of the greatest magnitude. In our own country at that time, the greatest statesmen, patriots, and heroes, who guided our councils, led our armies, and conducted our diplomacy, during the revolutionary struggle, our Washingtons, Franklins, Adamsses, Jeffersons, Shermans, Madisons, and a host of others, declared negro slavery to be irreconcilable with the precepts of the Gospel, or the rights of man; and the framers of the Constitution would not permit the word slave to pollute its pages.

Thus for the first time in the history of our Government has the Supreme Court stepped aside, without the shadow of a pretext to justify it, and undertaken to interfere with the legitimate functions of Congress, by virtually pronouncing its opinion upon matters in controversy between the two great political parties of the country. Such interference—so dangerous in its character, so monstrous in its action, and so terrible in its consequences—ought to be visited with indignation and scorn by the American people. Has it come to this, that that august tribunal—adorned as it has been by a Jay, an Ellsworth, a Rutledge, a Cushing, and a Marshall, with their illustrious associates—has prostituted its high functions and pre-eminent authority to such base purposes, with its venerable chief and his associates descending to political partisans? The fears of Mr. Jefferson, in relation to that court, have at last been realized—fears which he so often expressed, that it would usurp authority and power, which the framers of the Government never intended it should possess; and while that illustrious statesman and sage lived, it was with him a matter of constant jealousy and watchfulness.

Establish the Republican party in power, and it will place upon the bench of the Supreme Court, as opportunity presents, those who will interpret the Constitution and laws, not as political partisans, but as upright judges, holding the scales of justice even, whether they favor one side or the other. With this party in power, and not until then, our commercial, manufacturing, and agricultural interests will be properly cared for.

But upon whom do the South rely? Upon the northern Democracy, drawn to their support, in the language of Mr. Calhoun, "by the cohesive power of public plunder?" What a support! and where is it always found, when the national Treasury is in other hands? Passing ultra anti-slavery resolutions, and vying with each other in making anti-slavery professions, to secure the offices and emoluments of the State governments. So it has always been in our State, and so it will ever be, so long as Democrats are willing to sell themselves for a mess of pottage. No abolition convention ever passed stronger anti-slavery resolutions, or made stronger anti-slavery professions, than the Democrats of Massachusetts have done when the Democracy have been out of power in the national Government. Their ablest leader—that statesman of national renown—Caleb Cushing, while he was looking to Massachusetts for approbation and support, met every anti-slavery demand with an alacrity that would have been truly commendable if it had only been sincere. No man ever uttered on the floor of Congress nobler sentiments for freedom than he. No man ever denounced the aggressions of the South stonger than he did; and I am sorry to say it, for I respect his great abilities, no son of Massachusetts ever debased himself so much to obtain favor with the South as Caleb Cushing.

Many have listened with amazement to the disunion speeches upon the other side of the House; at their cool effrontery and apparent sincerity. I say apparent sincerity, for they do appear to be in earnest; and although I have as little regard for the judgment and good sense of mere talkers and rhetoricians as any one, and appreciate, I think, most fully their barrenness of either of these qualities, yet I am hardly prepared to believe in their sincerity at the expense of such a draft upon the soundness of their judgment.

In fact, we have heard it intimated upon this floor, by the advocates of disunion, that these threats have been often before made, with no purpose to execute them; but now they say they are terribly in earnest. If gentlemen will consult the record of debates upon this floor, they will find that twenty years ago the South was as denunciatory in tone, as belligerent in attitude, as brave



in declaration, as prolific in threats of dissolution, as now. Eloquent gentlemen told us then that the danger was imminent, the crisis was at hand, and unless this agitation of the slavery question ceased, the Union must be dissolved. About that time, a very quiet gentleman in my own county, with a few associates, believing that it was the duty of the North to absolve itself from all responsibility for the existence of slavery, proposed to let the South take care of itself; and therefore petitioned Congress to effect a peaceable dissolution of the Union.

The petition was presented by the venerable Mr. Adams, and such an exhibition of consternation, rage, and confusion, on the part of southern members, has seldom been witnessed on this floor. Mr. Adams barely escaped a vote of censure for presenting the petition. Never since that experience has the country had cause to believe that the South could be in earnest in its threats of dissolution.

I remember that Mr. Webster and Mr. Choate, of my own State, were once engaged as opposing counsel in a patent case, and Mr. Choate's client was endeavoring to prove—what was indispensable to his cause—that two sections of a machine that looked exactly alike were in reality entirely different. Mr. Choate addressed the jury with all that learning, eloquence, and zeal that characterized that gifted man, and such was his earnestness and power that the parties in interest on the other side began to tremble, and feel that, after all, there might be a difference. Mr. Webster arose, and said quietly to the jury: "All this learning and eloquence is very pleasant to listen to, but so far as this case is concerned, it is all poetry and moonshine," and, holding up the machines, he said, "*look at them, look at them; do you see any difference? Of course not; there is none. You see it—you know it.*" These few words dispelled all of the effect of Mr. Choate's gorgeous eloquence. Such is the power of truth.

So, here are the Constitution and the Union. Look at them, *look at them*, among the greatest monuments of human genius the world has ever witnessed; look at the blood and treasure they have cost; look at the mighty interests involved in their perpetuity, and then tell me if any parri-  
cidial arm shall ever be permitted to demolish them? Never! never! never!

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## PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN OF 1860.

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